Chapter 1
The Actor's Real Role on the Production Team

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Abstract The primary purpose of this chapter is to show how the actor's job of bringing the scripted events of a drama to vibrant life onstage is necessarily a creative endeavor. A detailed analysis of the acting process will reveal that, from the first reading to the final public performance, an actor must create the "live" aspect of the play in terms of amplifying and communicating the deep meaning he or she finds behind the literal words. This communication is accomplished by the actor's emotional conviction, vocal inflection, body language, and all other channels of communication. The training methods used in higher education, designed to produce this ability, are herein described along with some methodological variations. A secondary purpose of this chapter is to review some theories of creativity offered by a number of prominent researchers and to show how precisely these theories can be applied to the main elements of the acting process.

1.1 Introduction

Creativity is a given in most art forms: the composer creates a symphony, the painter creates a picture, the author creates a novel. However, in theatre, the artists who bring the play to life are often considered to be primarily interpreters. The playwright creates the script; all the other artists (actors, designers, even the director) are there to serve the author's vision. Few professionals would challenge this guiding principle, at least while the author is alive. However, although a play can be read as a piece of literature, it does not serve its true purpose until it becomes a living entity on stage, a process that requires the contributions of multiple creative artists. This chapter will concentrate on one member of the production team: the actor.

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To put this information in perspective, we should sketch in our backgrounds. Helga is a professor of Psychology and cognitive researcher with an extensive record of publication. Tony is a Professor of Theatre, researcher, and professional actor who has appeared in over 100 productions under union (Equity-SAG-AFTRA) contracts. Our joint investigations into the nature and benefits of the acting process have been widely circulated in the cognitive literature. The early stages of these investigations were concerned with actors' memory. By memory, we do not mean memorization, but retrieval and subsequent performance of the entire stored mental representation including thoughts, feelings, elaborations, and speculations acquired during script analysis and rehearsal, which in turn, prompt spontaneous new thoughts and feelings at every performance. We have done a few studies on memorization per se. For example we compared script learning strategies of the famous mnemonist, Harry Lorayne, with the learning strategies of six professional actors. As expected, Lorayne employed the technical mnemonic devices of visualization and association whereas the actors analyzed the deep meaning of the script, concentrating on motivations and relationships (Noice and Noice 1996).

1.2 Application of Actors' Creativity to a Societal Problem

Another strand of our research concerns lowering risk factors for Alzheimer's disease by engaging older adults in a short (four-week) course in acting as a form of mental stimulation. Before and after the course, the participants and controls are tested by administration of up to 13 valid and reliable measures of cognitive and affective functioning that are standard in the field. More than 15 years of such testing (e.g., Noice and Noice 2009, 2013) under strict scientific conditions revealed that the acting group consistently improved on standard measures of creativity, memory, comprehension, problem-solving, and positive affect compared to matched controls. This chapter will outline how our research into the nature and benefits of acting can provide evidence and insight into our proposition that an actor is necessarily a creative artist. In addition, we will look at the burgeoning field of creativity studies and show how the details of actors' processes can frequently be explained by creativity theories.

1.3 Overview of the Chapter

First, we will look at how the very nature of a script forces the actor to engage in a unique creative process. Then we'll explore acting itself and analyze why each aspect necessitates creativity rather than just interpretation. Finally, we'll address how these findings might align with theories proposed by some leading researchers in the field of creativity studies.

We start by comparing a theatrical script with other forms of fictional narrative. For example, in a novel, we might find the following:

> Mike wended his way through the crowd, hoping his desperation wasn't obvious. He needed a drink, fast. Thank God the Reception had an open bar. He was next in line when he was stopped by the sudden appearance of a familiar face.
>
> "Mike Davis, how are you?"
> It was Justin Stern, one of the last people in the world Mike wanted to run into.
> "Oh – I'm fine, Justin. How about you?"
> "Doing just great, thanks."
> He looked like he was doing great. But why not? Mike was well aware that Justin had led a charmed life for the last twenty years.

In this snippet, the author tells the reader about the thoughts, emotions, and motivations of the protagonist in addition to his literal actions and utterances. However, in a play's script, there is no narrative, only dialogue and a few stage directions. For instance, if the above excerpt were written as a play, the entire scene would consist of:

> (MIKE is hurrying toward the bar when a man approaches him)
> JUSTIN: Mike Davis, how are you?
> MIKE: Oh – I'm fine, Justin. How about you?
> JUSTIN: Doing just great, thanks.

Our research has shown that because the playwright is constrained from directly manipulating viewpoint, actors fill in the gaps by imaginatively creating the attitudes, motivations, goals and emotions of the characters (Noice and Noice 2002, 2006). The audience infers these qualities from the actor's body language, facial expression, vocal inflection, and other observable behavioral cues. To accomplish this behavioral specificity, the actor probes both the dialogue and his or her own psyche for clues to the play's deep meaning, a process that can either be intuitive or the result of detailed analysis (e.g., Noice and Noice 1994).

As was just shown, the very nature of the script routinely forces actors to perform the types of tasks that are both *novel* and *useful*, long considered the hallmarks of creativity (e.g., Amabile et al. 1996). The process is novel because it must be created anew (at least in part) for every performance, and useful because it brings that performance to full life on stage, the *sine qua non* for the viewers. However, we believe it goes far beyond that. In order to see the extent of the actor's creativity it is necessary to specify exactly what the acting process is and how professional training and experience promote engagement in creative activity.

1.4 History of Acting Training

There have been many attempts to define the ephemeral art of acting, but they all seem to agree on one central point: acting is *doing* not *pretending*—*real doing*. The seminal figure in the quest to devise a teachable system of this "reality of doing" was a Russian actor-director, Konstantin Stanislavski, who was dismayed at the

overblown histrionics of much acting in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, he noticed that some actors (including the notable Italian star, Tomasso Salvini) were able to create a powerful sense of truth and reality within the prevailing declamatory style of theatrical performance. Stanislavski reasoned that, if he could uncover the difference between a Salvini and the run-of-the-mill actors that populated the world's stages of that era, he could create a grammar of acting that would usher in a new era of truthful role-playing. Stanislavski spent the rest of his life experimenting with various physical/emotional/mental techniques designed to make such truthful performance teachable. (For a complete up-to-date translation of his writings, see Stanislavski 2008.)

News of the Stanislavski System soon spread throughout the English-speaking theatre world, aided by his US tours in 1923-4 and his autobiography, *My Life in Art* (1924). It is foolhardy to try to distill 40 years of investigation into a few paragraphs, but for a chapter of this type, a summary must be attempted. One of the truly seminal concepts behind the system is the notion of the *doable verb*. Stanislavski felt this concept was the key that would allow actors to play truthfully, spontaneously, and without pretense. In application, the actor analyzes the script to determine what the character is actually doing at that moment in order to get what he or she wants under the circumstances given by the playwright. Then the actor boils that knowledge down to a series of active verbs that stimulate the actor to actually *do* something to affect (or at least attempt to affect) the other actor or actors in the scene (e.g., *to threaten, to cajole, to plead with, to embarrass, etc.*).[1]

By becoming completely involved (mentally, physically, and emotionally) in the action of the verb, the actor avoids any need for fakery. Because these actions are subject to the actor's will, he or she can execute them truthfully at any time, thus bringing the onstage event to full life.

Notice that all verbs and verbal phrases we've used as examples can actually be done. This is not true of all verbal phrases. For example, a perfectly plausible analysis of Willie Loman's actions in *Death of a Salesman* would result in the phrase, *to pursue the American Dream* but no actor could get up on stage and perform that pursuit because it is not doable. On the other hand, when Willie is forced by exhaustion to abort his sales trip to New England, he can come home and *confess* to his wife that he can't face road trips anymore and *plead with her for understanding*, then *assure* her that he will request a transfer to an in-town route. Most actors could easily become involved in the actions of *confessing*, *pleading for understanding* and *assuring a loved one.* Of course, the more talented the actor, the more deeply he or she can become involved in such actions and the more exciting and unpredictable the results will be, but acting teachers have found over the years that most students can learn the basic process. That is, that most students can be taught how to sponta-

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[1] The examples given here hold true for realistic theatre in which the actors' intentions match those of the character. For example, in the dining room scene of William Gibson's *The Miracle Worker*, Anne Bancroft's/Annie Sullivan's doable verbal phrase was probably something like '*to force this child to bend to my will.*' Conversely, in a farce or a comedy sketch, a typical doable verbal phrase might be *to delight the audience with this over-exaggerated gesture.*

neously generate behavior that is both novel and useful. One of the best descriptions of this aspect of acting comes from British film star, Michael Caine:

> You must be able to stand there *not* thinking of that line. You take it off the other actor's face... Otherwise, for your next line, you're not listening and not free to respond naturally, to act spontaneously. (Caine 1990, pp. 28–29)

One part of that quote, "You take it off the other actor's face," refers to the widely accepted notion that spontaneous acting requires attending to the other actor's behavior (in this case, facial expression) to glean whether or not you are accomplishing your task (i.e., doable verb). This can change with every performance depending on factors within the actors at that moment. Such thoughts might include, "I don't think she's buying this" or "This may be easier than I thought." Of course, we do not mean that the actors would literally think these specific words. These are fleeting impressions that spontaneously prompt changes in each actor's thoughts and feelings. Therefore these newly hatched thoughts and feelings affect *how* the dialogue is spoken even though the words remain exactly the same at every performance. Similarly, the movements about the stage will remain the same but the *quality* of those movements will vary in accordance with the feelings that arise spontaneously during the interaction.

In sum, if two actors, Dan and John, are playing characters, Joey and Bill, and the script calls for Joey to mock Bill, then Dan actually mocks John. He does not try to look and sound like someone engaged in mocking, he just mocks the other actor *for real.* Audiences have a great fakery meter and can usually sense when the actor is not personally involved but just imitating the shell of the transaction (many actors call this *indicating*). Noted theatrical theorist Robert Cohen offered the following description of truthful engagement onstage:

> …the actor and the character are indistinguishable from each other; they are merged. This is why acting is acting. This is why it engages, not only the consciousness of body and voice, but the entire human organism: the autonomic nervous system, the sweat glands, the emotions, the tear ducts, and the thousands of hidden processes which control intonation, resonance, movement, flickerings, heartbeat and respiration. (Cohen 1978, p. 61)

Such insights help the actor to live in a perpetual *now* on stage but under the constraints imposed by professional theatre. The actor must not only say the exact words of the script at every performance (it's in the playwright's contract), he or she must *mean* them anew at the moment of utterance, acting on whatever impulses are generated by the process. As one very popular acting book put it, "...your task is to act on them [impulses] as they occur to you. In other words, as scary as it sounds*, you must act before you think*" (Bruder et al. 1986, p. 43). This remarkable process is also in keeping with one of the most widely accepted definitions of acting: "Living truthfully under imaginary circumstances" (Meisner and Longwell 1987, p. 15). Obviously, living truthfully entails complete spontaneity including whatever thoughts arise as a result of each transaction. These thoughts will vary from actor to actor and from night to night; if the situation created by the playwright calls for one actor to confront the other, in any one performance, the thoughts accompanying the confrontation might be influenced by factors within the actor who is doing the

confronting or prompted by the second actor's behavioral response, or both. Much of an actor's training is devoted to preparing the ground for such truthful spontaneity to appear. As actress Lois Smith put it: the actor prepares the ground for what comes "unbidden" (Black 1995, p. 67). These unbidden thoughts and feelings necessarily affect the actor/character's onstage behavior, and acting on them without premeditation requires bravery. Indeed, most acting classes devote time and effort to encouraging students to become risk-takers. (Risk-taking has frequently been identified as a component of creative behavior, e.g., Dewett 2007.)

It would appear that the actor's process involves two different phases. The preliminary phase consists of deliberately analyzing the script to discover the verb that best captures the fictitious interaction. Obviously actors' mental processes differ, so the verb might come to one actor in a flash of intuition or to another as a result of hard thinking over a length of time. Of course, the verb must be appropriate to the situation. Take the literal line of dialogue, "Where were you last night?" If the situation created by the playwright concerns two friends one of whom had promised to help the other pack the night before but failed to show up, the verb might be *to blame* or *to accuse* or *to demand an explanation,* depending on how that particular actor feels about the transaction. However, if the situation is such that one actor knows the other had a hot date the night before, the verb for the same line of dialogue might be *to tease* or *to pry* or to *get a rise out of him/her.* There is no one correct verb, just whichever the actor intuitively feels captures the essence of that moment. A caveat is in order here: the goal of the doable verb is to aid in the actor's *reality of doing* (also known as *being in action*). Many very good actors find that simply reading the playwright's text engages them in situation-specific action without employing a technical device such as determining the doable verb. Other actors find their own individual triggers; we know one very busy professional who is frequently cast as a slick, manipulative character. He arrives at the appropriate reality of doing by simply thinking, "ice cream." Nevertheless, generations of acting teachers have found that the technique of determining and executing the doable verb is very helpful to most of their students.

For his followers, Stanislavski offered a tool for finding appropriate verbs. He called it, *the magic if.* To employ this device, actors ask themselves what they would do under *the given circumstances*. (*The given circumstances* are comprised of all the information gleaned from the playwright's script including, time, place, atmosphere, the wants and needs of the characters, etc. Actors are cautioned *not* to misapply *the magic if* and use it as an invitation to play themselves.) A contemporary textbook (widely used in higher education) gives an example of the proper way to employ this tool:

> If I were in the circumstances of the character, and if I wanted what the character wants, and if I allowed myself to do the things the character does to try to satisfy those needs, who would I become? (Benedetti 2015, p. 85)

This device is a much more precisely targeted version of one frequently discussed in the creativity literature in which the students are prompted to ask themselves '*what if?*' in order to trigger imaginative speculation on possible solutions to a given problem.

After determining the appropriate doable verb, the student actor comes to the second stage of this approach, in which he/she becomes fully involved in the execution of the verb. This involvement appears to be another order of creativity; the actor does not have time for analysis but must spontaneously act on the thoughts that arise. In fact, Stanislavski referred to this total involvement in the execution of the verb as *the creative state* or, according to some translators*, the creative state of mind (*e.g., Barton 2009; Gordon 1987. See also Benedetti 2015). On the surface, Stanislavski's notion of this *creative state* seems very much like Mihály Csíkszentmihályi's famous *flow* theory. In his book, *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention* (2006), Csíkszentmihályi lists nine elements of *flow*, all of which, in the opinion of the actor half of this writing team, are indeed involved in the acting process. However, given Csíkszentmihályi's prodigious output, we will leave it to Csíkszentmihályi experts to be the final arbiters of the comparison between the *creative state* and *flow theory*.

It should be noted that many people make the assumption that the actor's process as we have described it is the same as so-called *method acting,* but actually it is simply good acting, whether employed in a contemporary realistic play or a Shakespearean verse tragedy. The style of the production will affect how this truthful interaction is handled but such distinctions are beyond the scope of this chapter.

In brief, we believe that a wide cross-section of actors engage in the foregoing process; that is, they become completely involved in truthfully executing the action of the verb. It must be emphasized that well trained actors avoid faking a response but simply remain open to the stimuli coming from the other actors. Thus the performance bounces back and forth with each actor *working off* the other, a process that can produce not only behavioral changes but genuine and very strong situation-specific emotions. This give-and-take brings the fictional play to vibrant life. We believe this *working off the other* is one obvious aspect of an actor's creativity: experiencing new thoughts and feelings that can change every night because changeability is indeed the nature of all truthful real-life exchanges.

This experiencing of the reality of doing onstage raises a fascinating unanswered question about an actor's mental processes: How is it possible for the brain to tap into its storehouse of a lifetime of experiences, come up with situation-specific thoughts and feelings, and then act upon them truthfully and spontaneously? That question lies at the heart of the theoretical part of our research. We hope scores of future researchers will continue the quest for an answer because the knowledge might provide insight into the elusive nature of speculative human thinking.

Looking at this mysterious process of "living truthfully under imaginary circumstances" from the perspective of a cognitive psychologist, we might find a perceptual explanation. The concept of *embodied cognition* is gaining more and more credence in the scientific community, and we addressed its connection with acting some years ago (e.g., Noice and Noice 2006). According to this view, memory, thought, and language are based on actual perceptual (i.e., motor and sensory) experience. The theory states that

> Knowledge is embodied to the extent that (a) it depends on activity in systems also used for perception, action, and emotion, and (b) reasoning using that knowledge (including combining information from language and action) requires use of those systems. (A. M. Glenberg, personal communication, November 21, 2005)

Let's apply this theory to a possible interaction in a play; one actor/character might stare fixedly at the other, pick up a bottle of scotch, cross the room and say, "This is how I solve my problems." However, the quality of movements and speech will be different depending on the doable verb; is the actor/character planning on greedily drinking from the bottle, hurling it at the other's head, or sending a signal that he or she is through with alcohol by pouring the contents down a sink?[2] These interpretations of the situation would produce different facial expressions, vocal inflections, and body language. Using the vocabulary of Glenberg's version of embodiment theory, these potential actions are called affordances (i.e., they can all be performed with the bottle of scotch), and the meaning of any situation in life or onstage is derived from the meshing of the affordances available in the situation. Obviously the highly specific theatrical concept of the doable verb (as discussed earlier) would be covered by embodiment theory but so would all other human activities and actions.

This aspect of embodied cognition is in keeping with Glenberg's view that comprehension and memory are grounded in bodily action (e.g., Glenberg and Kaschak 2002). Thus, applied to actors, embodiment theory covers remembering dialogue, living truthfully under imaginary circumstances, dwelling on the actor's offstage concerns (such as the never-ending search for the next role), or even deciding what to eat for dinner.

1.5 Application of Acting Exercises to Creativity

A possible contribution of the acting process to the study of creativity is that the techniques of acting that encourage creation of unbidden thoughts and feelings can be learned by most students, at least in rudimentary form, opening up the possibility that teaching acting techniques to non-theatre students might enhance their creativity. Here is one of the acting exercises we've used in our research that repeatedly produced statistically significant increases in our measures of creativity and other cognitive abilities.

After instruction in the core processes of *reality of doing*, *executing doable verbs*, and *achieving spontaneity*, the following *open scene* is handed out to all students.

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[2] At first glance, these actions seem less specific than our earlier examples of the type of "doable verbs" that would be helpful to actors in maintaining their reality of doing onstage. However, as already pointed out, actors differ and we believe that, for many of them, these terms certainly could be considered "doable." For example, *greedily drinking from the bottle* after saying "This is how I solve my problems" could lead an actor to a feeling that he is trying to force the other actor/character to recognize just how insoluble his drinking problem is.

Open Scene Exercise
A: Ready?
B: No.
A: Why not?
B: I'm not sure.
A: Yes, you are.
B: Why are you doing this?
A: It's the best thing.
B: You mean the best thing for you.
A: We agreed about this.
B: You talked me into it.
A: You know that we have no choice.
B: Something might come up.
A: Like what?
B: I don't know.
A: Okay, then let's go.

The students are divided into pairs and each pair is asked to jointly create a plausible situation in which the above dialogue might be used (e.g., two friends are going to a party but one has just learned that his or her ex will be there). Each student is then told to analyze the script and come up with a verb that his or her assigned character (A or B) would use in that situation. The same verb may be used for a number lines of dialogue or the students may change verbs whenever they think a change is appropriate. When all students have accomplished the task, each pair comes up in front of the class. They read the scene aloud slowly, with each student taking as much time as necessary before reading each line to make sure he or she has accessed the doable verb to the point where the actor is mentally, physically, and emotionally involved in the execution of that verb. To aid them in becoming fully involved, the students are told to put all their concentration on *meaning* what they are saying *as* they are saying it. They are told they will eventually learn the exact words and perform the scene with appropriate movements, but for the time being, affecting their acting partner by complete involvement in their doable verbs is their only job. They are also told NOT to deliberately memorize their lines because, with enough rehearsal, the actors will absorb them as a result of genuinely meaning them each time they say them. Obviously, this open scene imposes creative demands on the students both during preparation (choosing plausible situations and doable verbs) and performance (acting on whatever impulses occur). We would hope that such acting exercises would engender creativity in non-acting students and will explore that notion in the next section.

1.6 Empirical Research Findings

As previously mentioned, our 15-year program of experiments investigating the cognitive/affective benefits of a short course in acting has consistently yielded positive results on accepted measures of creativity. However we would be remiss if we didn't point out that these results may be due to a combination of the various elements covered in all instructional sessions and not to one particular exercise such as the above open scene. Overall, the teaching of this four-week, eight-session course involved the rationale of "living truthfully under imaginary circumstances" as described in detail earlier in this chapter. Every exercise emphasized that acting is never pretending. The students were taught to analyze the script to determine what the character was actually doing at that moment and then to do it *for real*.

For example, in one study (Noice and Noice 2009), the experimental group received our acting course, and controls included both a comparison group (a course in singing of equal length) and a no-treatment group. Results showed that the acting group improved significantly over both the comparison group (singing) and the no-treatment controls on almost all test measures, including memory, comprehension, creativity and problem-solving. We have replicated these results under a variety of procedures, including different comparison groups (Noice and Noice 2004), different instructors (Noice and Noice 2013), different types of stimuli (Noice and Noice 2006), and different assessment measures (Noice and Noice 2009).

One of our pre-post measures, category fluency (i.e., word generation) has long been considered an important measure of creativity. Moreover, another measure, the Means-end Problem Solving test (MEPS, Platt and Spivak 1975), would seem very much in keeping with the concepts currently described in the creativity literature. In the latter measure, the participant receives a problem statement and the one sentence solution. The task is to generate a number of imaginative but appropriate steps one would perform to arrive at that solution. For example, if the problem was that a man had lost his watch and the solution was that he found it, a low scoring protocol might simply be "he remembered where he left it" whereas a high scoring protocol might include descriptions of the search of all the different places he could have taken off his watch, the reasons for the great sentimental value of the watch, the people he encountered during the search and their helpful or unhelpful advice on finding it, etc. The MEPS is somewhat similar to the Kaleidoscope creativity test (Sternberg 2012).

Another concept frequently written about by creativity researchers is that of intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation. We certainly agree that the former promotes creativity, and, in our experience, actors are rarely motivated by extrinsic rewards like fame or money. Actors who are so motivated are in for a great disappointment. Even when they have enough credits and experience to qualify for union status, only a small fraction make a full-time living in professional theatre. Actors Equity Association releases annual employment statistics for live theatre. Such records show that, year after year, only about 15 percent of union members are employed at any one time.

The statistics for the film and television unions are equally dim. Yet actors continue to assault the citadel, while taking care of their everyday needs by working as cab drivers, waiters, or office temps. Intrinsic motivation no doubt enhances their creativity but, sadly, does little for their bottom line.

1.7 Acting and Current Theories of Creativity

Before trying to integrate these two areas of expertise, a definition of creativity seems necessary. Plucker et al. (2004) offered the following: "Creativity is the interaction among aptitude, process, and environment by which an individual or group produces a perceptible product that is both novel and useful as defined within a social context." This very inclusive definition obviously applies to acting as it would to most artistic domains.

A recent book chapter (Beghetto and Kaufman 2016) reviewed current theories of creativity that have been proposed by well known researchers in the field. The authors noted that theories are like containers, convenient ways to sort concepts into categories according to their commonalities. Of course, perfect assignment of theories to categories will never be possible because of individual differences. Nevertheless, such categorization is useful and Beghetto and Kaufman's breakdown seems an excellent way to give some order to this disparity. They sort a number of specific theories of creativity into four categories by concentrating on four theoretical elements: who, how, why, and what. To avoid any misinterpretation during the following discussion, we will quote Beghetto and Kaufman's rationales for assignment to categories:

WHO: "these theories clarify what it takes to be creative as well as the developmental trajectory of creativity,"(p. 36)

HOW: "these theories help clarify the factors and processes that lead to creative outcomes,"(p. 39)

WHY: "these theories help explain the reasons why people engage in creative thinking and action," (p. 40.)

WHAT: "these theories help clarify different types of creativity and what counts as creative in and across different domains," (p. 42).

We will use this same framework to indicate precisely how acting aligns with almost all such theories. Although the Beghetto and Kaufman review article summarizes fourteen theories spread over the four categories, we will use just one from each category for illustrative purposes.

WHO Traditionally, researchers have divided theories of creativity into two categories: little-c (everyday creativity) and Big-C (pre-eminent creativity as exemplified by a Mozart or Picasso). However, Kaufman and Beghetto have expanded this into their own developmental 4-C Model, consisting of mini-c, little-c, Pro-c, and Big-C (Kaufman and Beghtto 2009). Looking at this model through the lens of

acting, we find that the first element (mini-c) applies to initial learning of acting theory in which the actor learns that, although most outsiders think of acting as expert imitation, it is actually the *reality of doing*. The second C (little-c) would take place when the fledging actor starts performing roles, usually in school plays, and starts to experience the (probably fleeting) sensation of truthfully responding to other actors within the fictional situation. In the third stage (Pro-c), the actor would have achieved acceptance in the world of professional theatre, earning his or her living by acting. Finally, in the last stage of development (Big-C) the actor would be widely regarded as one who sets a new standard of performance that fellow professionals would aim for but rarely achieve.

HOW One of the theories the Beghetto and Kaufman review uses as an example of this category is the *Creative Process Model* (Kozbelt et al. 2010; Sawyer 2012; Wallas 1926). The original formulation contained four stages: preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification. Applied to acting, the preparation stage would consist of the actor's learning how to break down the script in order to analyze the character's needs and discover what he or she might do to satisfy them; in the incubation stage, the actor would (consciously or intuitively) generate the doable verbs that produce actions of the character. In the illumination stage, the actor would become deeply involved in these actions during rehearsal (i.e., doing them *for real*). Finally, in the verification stage, the actor would engage in public performance where his or her genuine involvement would encourage empathetic involvement by the audience. It should be emphasized that complete involvement in doable verbs by actors is the ideal toward which they strive; few would claim that they achieve this ideal at every minute of every performance.

WHY In this category of the review, Beghetto and Kaufman include Forgeard and Mecklenburg's (2013) 4-g theory, broken down into growth, gain, guidance and giving. For an actor, *growth* consists of ever-deepening ability to "live truthfully under imaginary circumstances" plus, of course, improving one's auxiliary acting skills such as vocal projection and bodily flexibility. *Gain* consists of increasing status in the profession and the attendant increase in remuneration. *Guidance* is directly involved if the actor is also a director or acting teacher but the main fulfillment of this element is simply in being a very good actor. Indeed, most actors credit their own improvement to the give-and-take involved in working with better actors. The fourth aspect of the 4-g theory, *giving*, is playing the role for the audience's pleasure as evinced in the cliché, "The actor gave a great performance."

WHAT As noted above, this final grouping in the review article is designed to "help clarify different types of creativity and what counts as creative in and across different domains" (Beghetto and Kaufman 2016, p. 42.) As an example, Beghetto and Kaufman cite the Amusement Park theory (Kaufman and Baer 2005), which takes a hierarchical approach and shows the way some experts conceive their specialized areas of inquiry by starting with a broad general view, then narrowing that down with ever-increasing specificity into initial requirements, general thematic

areas, domains, and micro-domains. To illustrate these theoretical elements Kaufman and Baer offer the analogy of an amusement park, starting with the entire Disney World complex in Florida and working down through the various levels of specificity to the individual rides. Applying this concept to theatre, a breakdown could consist of initial requirements (artistic ability); general thematic area (theatre arts); broad categories within that area (performing arts); Domains in that area (dancing, singing, acting), and micro-domains (acting).

Overall, the WHO-HOW-WHY-WHAT breakdown discussed in the Beghetto and Kaufman review is of great theoretical interest, but it offers no examples of how these four categories of creativity theories could be used to encourage creativity itself. However, former and current work from these and other researchers (including our own already cited studies) yields such information (e.g., Beghetto 2017; Sternberg 2012; Pfeiffer et al. 2017). For example, Pfeiffer et al. (2017) administered a validated survey on *self-efficacy in engineering design* to two groups of bioengineering students at the beginning and end of a one-semester capstone bioengineering course. A total of 90 students self-selected into groups of five each, depending on their chosen capstone projects. Three of the groups (15 students) were randomly assigned to the experimental condition; the remainder (75 students) became the control group. The only difference in treatment between groups was that the experimental group received an additional one-hour per week of creativity exercises designed by a theatre professor. Results showed that the experimental group demonstrated a significant increase (more than two-fold) on the self-efficacy survey compared to the control group.

Another procedure for enhancing creativity (Beghetto 2017) involves asking participants to generate examples of such items as CHARACTERS (e.g., teachers, students), SETTINGS (e.g., remote island, abandoned building), CONFLICT (e.g., mistaken identity, attack by monsters) and VIEWPOINT (e.g., first person, third person) and then to *randomly* select elements from each category, combining them into a narrative. The proponents of this teaching device believe it does double duty by giving instruction in both a subject area (writing) and in promoting creativity itself.[3] We feel that these and other approaches from the creativity literature will go a long way towards the enhancement of this important skill, and we hope that we have shown that acting instruction may join them as a candidate for this important endeavor.

To sum up, in this chapter, we have proposed that:

1. The nature of a theatrical script demands that actors create all the additional material that enables them to "live truthfully under imaginary circumstances."

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[3] This excellent pedagogical device was used for a different population almost a century ago. In the 1920s, there were literally over a hundred markets for short stories but they paid so little that writers had to churn out dozens of stories each month to make a bare living. A book called PLOTTO (William Wallace Cook 1924) offered hundreds of lists of protagonists, antagonists, and motives from which writers would randomly pick one from Column A and one from column B, etc. PLOTTO is in print to this day.

2. Actors' experience and training (at least in the dominant Stanislavski-based process taught in most U.S. universities) involve entering the so-called *creative state,* similar to Csíkszentmihályi's *flow theory*.
3. The main elements of the acting process are consistent with theories proposed by some of today's best-known scholars in the area of creativity studies.

We hope this chapter has presented convincing evidence that actors truly deserve the appellation of creative artists.

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